

# Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support Monthly Bulletin      MARCH 2011      ABE/LINK

## MTPDS Trains Primary Education Advisers in Early Grade Literacy

In its quest to improve the low levels of literacy and numeracy in early grades, MTPDS has embarked on a literacy and numeracy intervention in Salima and Ntchisi districts. The first step in implementation was the training of PEAs, District Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators (DLNCs) and Divisional Teacher Training Coordinators (DTTCs). 10 PEAs from Salima and 14 PEAs from Ntchisi attended the literacy training from 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> March 2011 at Msalura Teacher Development Center. This first training session, was entitled 'Effective Teaching Practices'. It prepared participants for training teachers in basic skills for teaching literacy during the forthcoming Easter holiday. After the training, it is expected that the 24 PEAs, 2 DLNCs and 6 DTTCs will train all STD 1-4 teachers in the two districts on basic literacy skills. They will also provide follow-up coaching support at school level.



*Participants in Salima district.*



*A participant holding a letter card*

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## CPD Starts Bearing Fruit: Success Stories from Thyolo and Dedza

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) supported by MTPDS has brought a sigh of relief to both teachers and learners around the country. The training has already started bearing fruits. Encouraging success stories are already flowing back from the field. Here are just 2 such stories.

Mr. Richard Saizi, a STD 4 teacher at Gunda Primary School in Luchenza Zone in Thyolo district shared his story with us. He disclosed that he finds language subjects not easy to teach. His crowded class has a total enrolment of 156 learners, with 81 girls and 75 boys. Textbooks supply is inadequate and he has felt that he lacks proper skills to teach literacy subjects efficiently and effectively. As a result most learners were not able to read words or sentences correctly. They could neither give correct spelling of

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words nor pronounce the words correctly. Absenteeism was also high and girls were very shy to participate in classroom activities. After the teachers from the zone underwent CPD training and started using the skills and knowledge shared, great positive impact has begun being realized. Creating a print rich environment was one of the topics Mr. Saizi employed to assist in solving his problems. He started enriching his class with a lot of written information on different subjects by pasting the information on the walls of his classroom. He made reference to the information hanging on the walls and elsewhere in the classroom and encouraged learners to read what was displayed during and after classes.



*Mr. Richard Saizi, at Gunda Primary School using the print pasted on the wall.*



*STD 4 Classroom at Gunda in Thyolo District with print hanging from the roof.*

As a result of this intervention, he observed that a good number of learners were improving in their reading and were able to write correct spellings. They have also improved in their vocabulary. He also reports that the average number of absentees has dropped from 22 to 8 per day. The teacher noted that there was joyful learning too. Learners move around the classroom even during free time to enrich themselves with knowledge and vocabulary. Mr. Saizi makes sure to paste some newspaper cuttings and pictures of successful women in politics, business and education. As a result of that, girls in his class have a higher self-esteem now than before and have started taking leadership roles with and among their peers.

Another success story reached us from Nthulu Primary School in Dedza District this school faced several challenges in teaching literacy and has been struggling to implement the new primary school curriculum. Many learners in the lower classes had problems to read and write English and Chichewa.

CPD literacy training for STD 1-4 teachers, gave a chance to Mr. Binton Kachinjika to be trained as a key teacher to facilitate the CPD literacy cluster trainings in the zone and to assist the Primary Education Advisor (PEA) Mr. Richard Izeki. After attending the training of trainers for CPD literacy training, Mr. Kachinjika trained all teachers at the school on creating a print rich environment. STD 1-4 teachers attended literacy training at Chimbiya cluster, where they were further encouraged to have a print rich environment in their classrooms. When the school was visited by DTTC Chrissie Mkhori-Phiri, she noted that even after school some learners who had knocked off were seen standing by the walls outside their classrooms reading letters of the alphabet and some words which the teachers pasted.

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*Learners appreciate a print rich environment.*

Mr. Kachinjika reported that learners have become interested to read newspaper cuttings, especially cartoons. The school tries as much as possible to change the cuttings every week. The school was visited by the Head teacher of Kavumba Primary School from Makankhula cluster to admire and appreciate what teachers at Nthulu School are doing, and through such peer interaction good practice is spreading from school to school. The School Management Committee and some members of the community support these effort by providing the school with money to buy glue for the teachers to use in pasting stories and newspaper cuttings. The newspapers are donated to the school by Mr. Johns Kumpita who runs a bus service business at Chimbiya. Although his children are not learners at Nthulu School, he realized the need for learners to be in an environment that encourages them to read in and outside their classroom. Learners are now able to read on their own, and they have started showing interest in reading. Teachers at the school see this as a step toward the right direction. They are eager for more CPD trainings in literacy, to sharpen their skills further.

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Have you already started using the skills gained from CPD? Let's all move on together!

## National Primary Curriculum M&E Framework development workshop

On 11<sup>th</sup> March, the Department of Inspection and Advisory Services (DIAS) through MTPDS called directors from various education institutions to a workshop to review the draft monitoring and evaluation framework for the National Primary Curriculum (NPC). The Deputy Director for DIAS, Mr. Raphael Agabu who was the Guest of Honor, reminded participants that the implementation of the current NPC rolled out in 2007 and that the NPC came with new policies, the implementation of which must be monitored. The purpose of the workshop was to let participants review and contribute to the draft M&E framework that was developed between August 2010 and February 2011 requiring improvement and decide the way forward. Presentations were made in the following areas of the framework:

- Brief introduction, overview and objectives of the NPC M&E framework,
- Criteria for selecting indicators,
- Recommended indicators (inputs- materials; training; support),
- Outputs and Outcomes,
- Towards a comprehensive NPC M&E Strategy.



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The NPC framework was accepted and endorsed by the participants, subject to certain proposed amendments. Members requested that the team should:

- clearly expand and explain the relationship between NESP and ESIP with the NPC M&E Framework;
- include qualitative and process indicators;
- provide additional explanation on the indicators and sampling strategies on data to be collected guided by the MoEST M&E guidelines;
- and set targets with reference to policies set in the policy documents.



*Participants listening to a presentation.*



*Dhuya Mtawali from DIAS, Davie Kaambankadzanja & Aaron Mapondera both from MIE*

## CPD Update

The CPD team had a number of activities in the month of March. Numeracy Module 1 has been printed and the national Trainers of Trainers workshop for Master Trainers took place from 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> March at Hippo View Lodge in Liwonde. Two modules have been refined and are being compiled into books in readiness for editing and printing. These are the Academic Life Skills module 1 and Leadership module 2. The Leadership module is focused on academic leadership. Both modules will have participant and facilitators manuals.

## Events Coming Up in April

- The standard 1 & 2 textbook revision writers workshop will take place at MIE starting April 4<sup>th</sup> and will continue for at least 2 weeks.
- Training of Trainers for PEAs and Key Teachers for Numeracy Module 2 will take place April 6<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>
- Dissemination of EGRA and EGMA baseline data will take place in April working with DIAS
- Module 1 of Literacy Intervention will be delivered in the Salima and Ntchisi during the Easter School Holiday.